

REMARKS

These remarks are directed to the office action mailed October 6, 2008, setting a three month shortened statutory period for response which expired on January 6, 2009. A three month extension request and required fee authorization accompanies this amendment to reset the period so as to expire on April 6, 2009. The office action issued by the Examiner and the citations referred to in the office action have been carefully considered.

Prompt reconsideration is requested in view of the above claim amendments and the following remarks. As indicated, amendments introduce no new matter. Claim 2 has been cancelled and claims 31-35 have been added. Claims 1-5 are currently pending.

Specification

The specification has been objected to because of informalities. The specification has been amended to overcome the Examiner's objections. Support for the amendments is found on page 2, line 31 to page 3, line 6 of Applicant's specification. No new matter has been added.

Claim Objections

Claims 4 and 5 have been objected to as being in improper multiple independent form. Claims 4 and 5 have been amended to now be in proper dependent form and thus overcome the Examiner's objections.

Claim Rejections under 35 USC § 103

Claims 1-3 have been rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Rajabali (WO 03/011594) and further in view of Forster et al. (US Patent 5,897,739).

Applicant submits that the Rajabali (WO 03/011594) publication cannot be used as prior art. Applicant is the **same inventor** of the Rajabali (WO 03/011594) publication, which has an

international publication date (Feb. 13, 2003) that is **less than one year** prior to the date of the current application's PCT filing date (Nov. 6, 2003).

Forster et al. discloses a method for producing honeycomb core composite articles and does not teach or suggest a method for producing metal layer laminates. Furthermore, as stated by the Examiner on page 6, Forster does not teach a centring pin, metal layers, or making a hole in the vacuum film and the evacuation medium at the location of the centring pin, removing the centring pin via the hole, and sealing the hole with sealing means.

In Column 2, Lines 46-54, Forster et al. describes the problems associated with a technique using protruding pins assembled about the periphery of a molding assembly. The protruding pins as described in Forster et al. are a source of high maintenance, pose a hazard to the operator, and create difficulties when sealing the vacuum bag, requiring the additional step of disposing a protective elastomer strip over the protruding pins to prevent damage to the vacuum bag. Forster et al. does not teach or suggest methods of using protruding pins that do not have the described problems, thus clearly showing that such methods are not obvious to one skilled in the art. Instead, Forster et al. teaches a method for producing honeycomb core composite articles that does not use protruding pins.

Applicant teaches a method of producing metal layer laminates using centring pins that does not have the problems described by Forester et al. Furthermore, the protruding pins described in Forster et al. remain in place during curing. In contrast, Applicant teaches the removal of the centring pins before activation of the bonding layers.

Forster et al. also does not teach an auxiliary ring that ensures that the top metal layer is not pulled upwards out of the hole when the centring pin is removed. As shown in FIG. 2a of Forster et al., the elastomer strip is placed over the top of the protruding pins to protect the vacuum bag. In contrast, Applicant clearly shows in Fig. 3 an auxiliary ring that fits around the centring pin and not over the centring pin.

Applicant submits that Forster et al. does not teach or suggest all the elements and limitations of independent claim 1. Therefore, independent claim 1 and the claims dependent therefrom are not obvious and are therefore patentable under 35 USC §103. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and now withdraw the Examiner's rejection.

Conclusion

It is respectfully submitted that all of the Examiner's objections have been successfully traversed and that the application is now in order for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration of the application and allowance thereof is courteously solicited.

The Director is authorized to charge any additional fee(s) or any underpayment of fee(s), or to credit any overpayments to **Deposit Account Number 50-2638**. Please ensure that Attorney Docket Number 072998-012600 is referred to when charging any payments or credits for this case.

Respectfully submitted,

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